

Providence Data in Your Backyard

Findings from the 2025 *Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook*

Presented by Stephanie Geller

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

June 18, 2025

Providence, Rhode Island



2025 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook

Special thanks to

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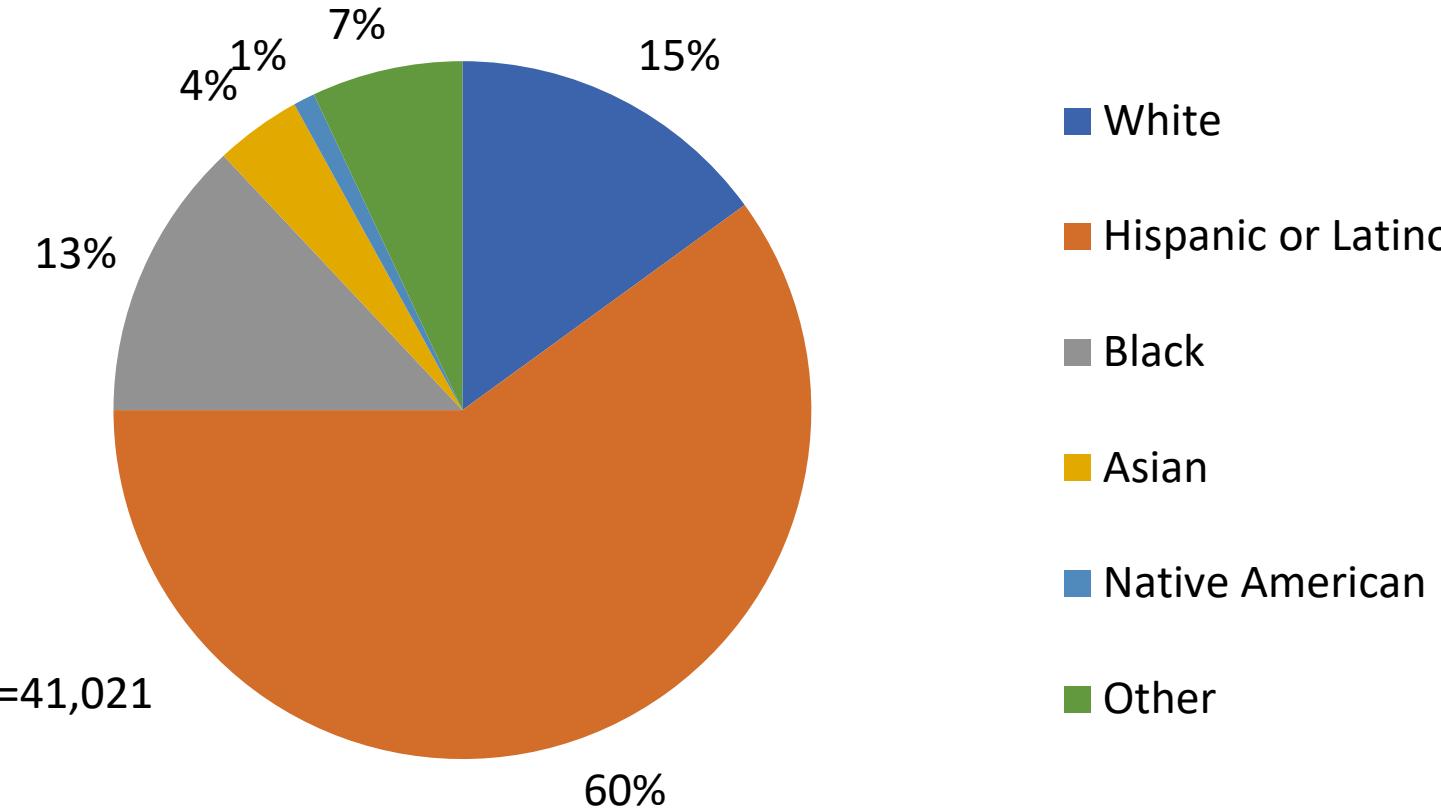
2025 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook

31st annual publication
67 indicators across 5 areas
City and town-level information





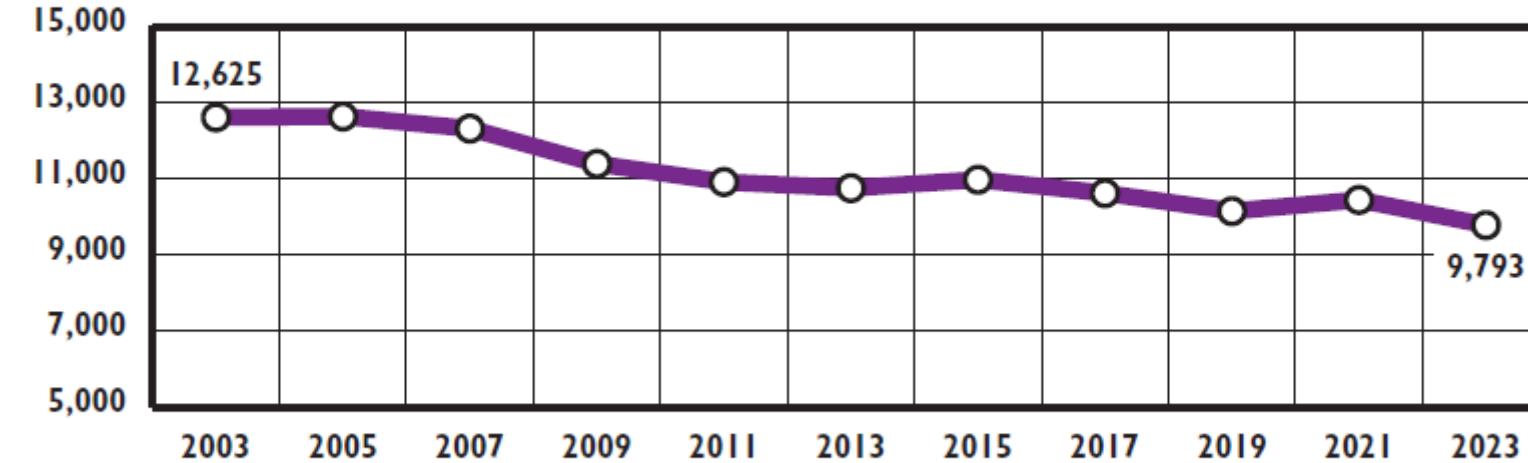
Providence's Child Population, 2020



- Child population in Providence up 8% since 1990, compared to a loss of 7% statewide
- Increasing racial/ethnic diversity



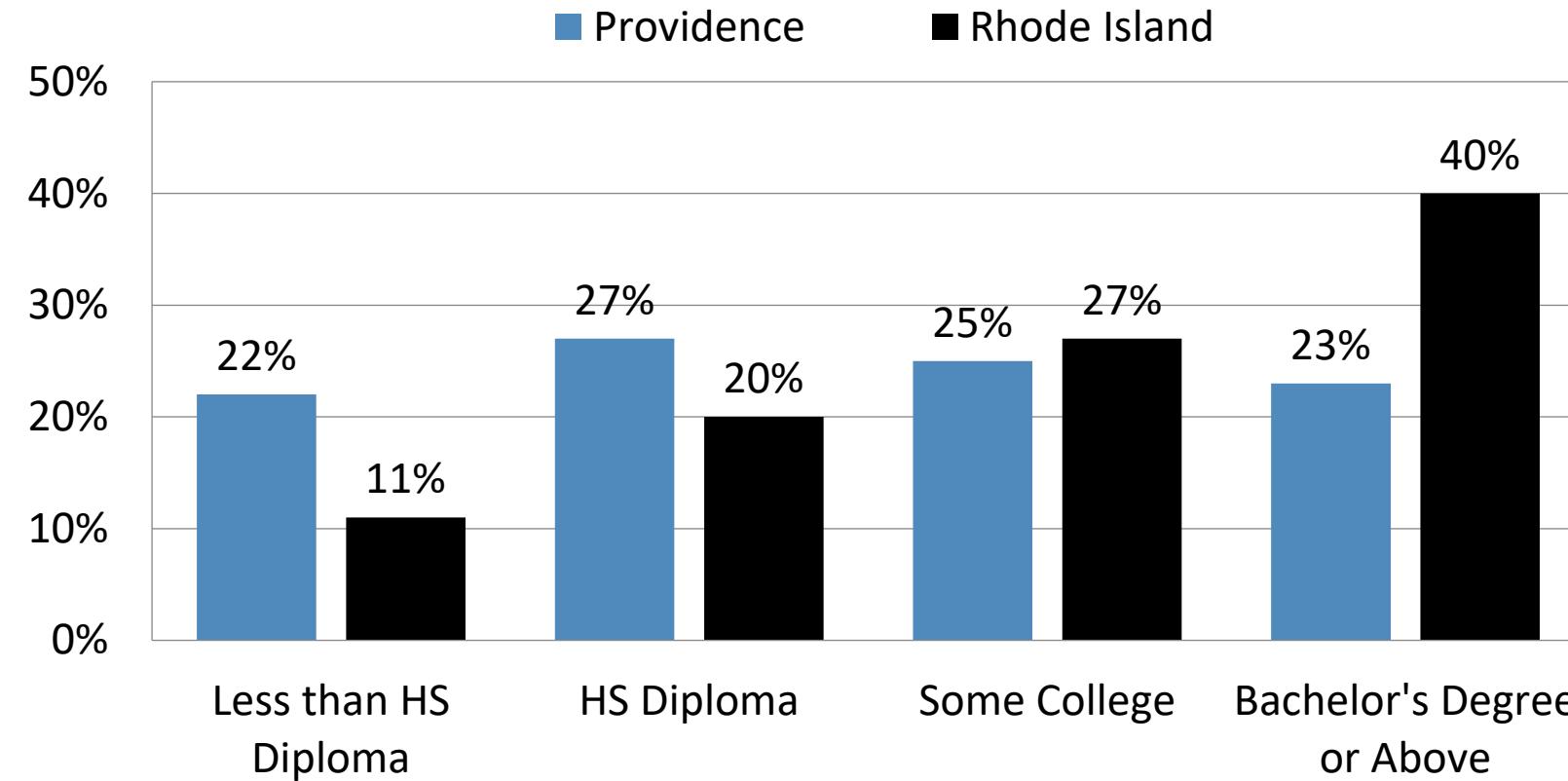
Rhode Island Births, 2003-2023



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Vital Records, Rivers Database 2003-2023. Note: Birth data includes babies born to mothers living in Rhode Island at the time of birth whether the baby was born in Rhode Island or elsewhere.

- Births have been declining for the past decade, both nationally and in Rhode Island.
- Rhode Island has the 3rd lowest fertility rate among states.
- In Providence:
 - 2,107 births in 2024
 - 70% of births to families with Medicaid – impact of federal cuts

Mother's Education Level, 2019-2023



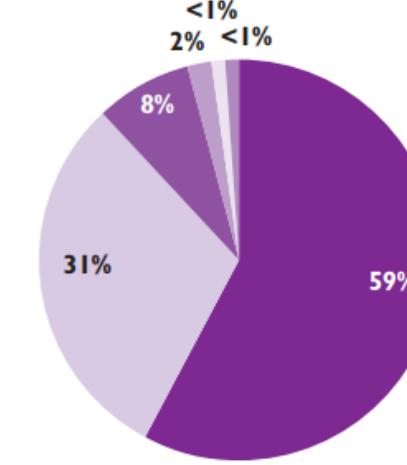
- Strong links between parental education levels and family income, child health, school readiness, and educational attainment

New Indicator: Family Structure



Children Under Age 18 by Family Structure Rhode Island, 2019-2023

59%	Married-Couple**
31%	Single-Parent**
8%	Other Relatives
2%	Foster Family or Other Unrelated Household
<1%	Group Quarters
<1%	Child is Head of Household

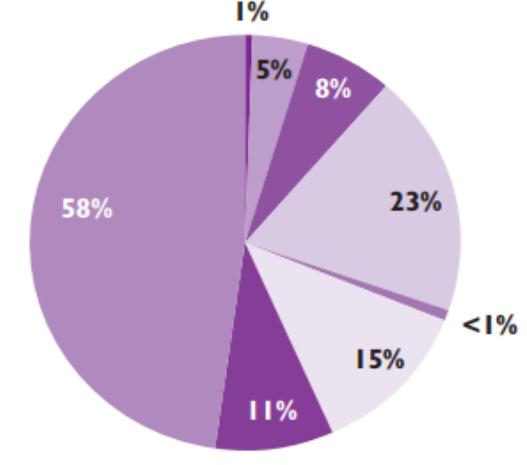


n=208,480



Multigenerational Households in Rhode Island, by Race & Ethnicity, 2020

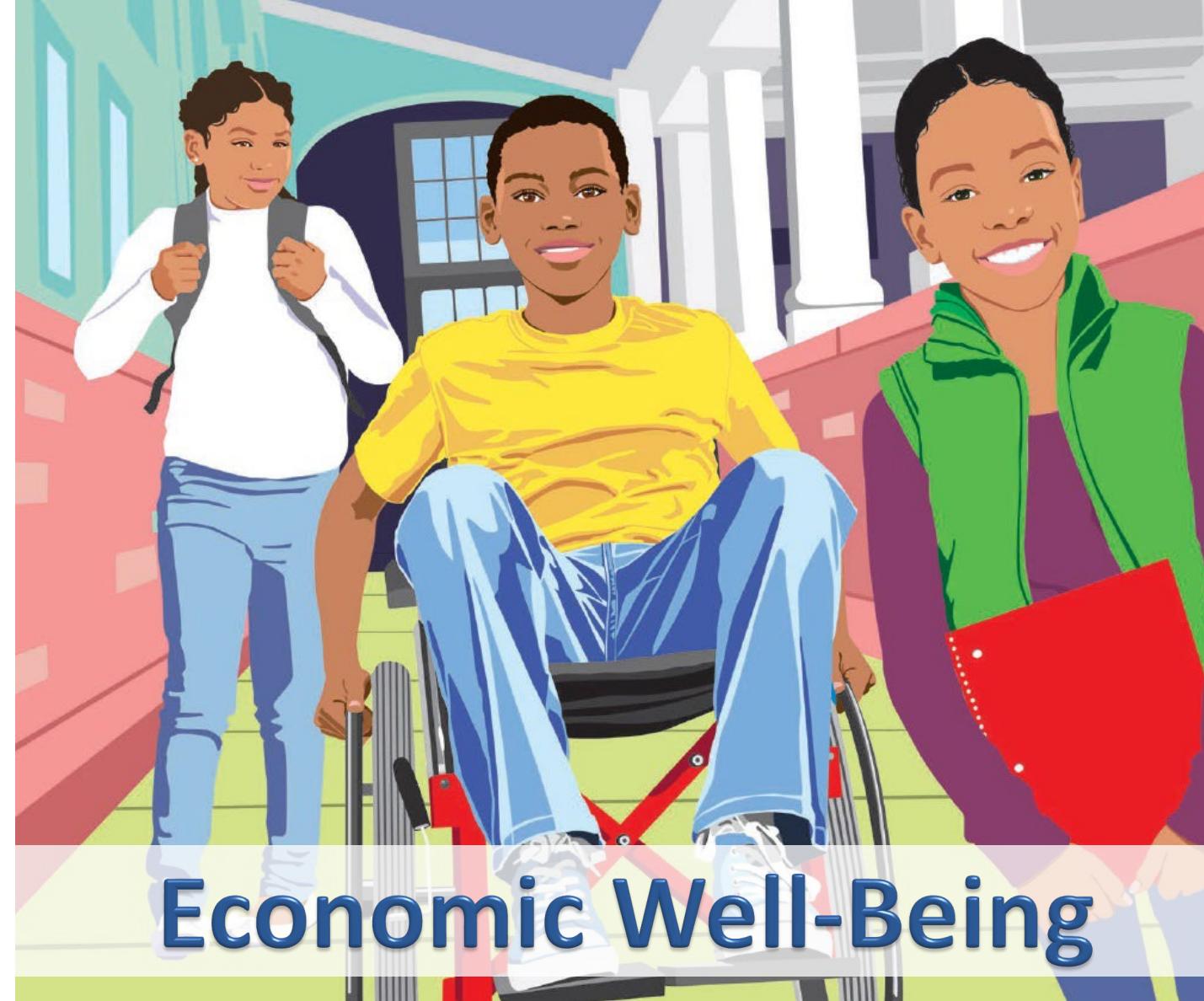
American Indian and Alaska Native	
Asian	
Black	
Hispanic	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
Some Other Race	
Two or More Races	
White	



n= 17,092

**Only includes children who are related to the head of household by birth or adoption.

- Multigenerational households can help families afford housing, support caregiving and parents' opportunity to pursue further education and job training, and promote close family bonds and mental and physical health.



Child Poverty Defined, 2024

■ **Poverty threshold**

- \$25,273 for a family of 3
- \$31,812 for a family of 4

■ **Extreme poverty threshold**

- \$12,637 for a family of 3
- \$15,906 for a family of 4

■ ***2024 Rhode Island Standard of Need***

- Single-parent family with 2 children would need \$83,239 a year to meet its basic needs, which would require a pre-tax income of \$99,418 (or \$47.80 per hour) to meet this budget without governmental subsidies.

Concentrated Child Poverty



Child Poverty Concentrated in Four Core Cities, Rhode Island, 2019-2023

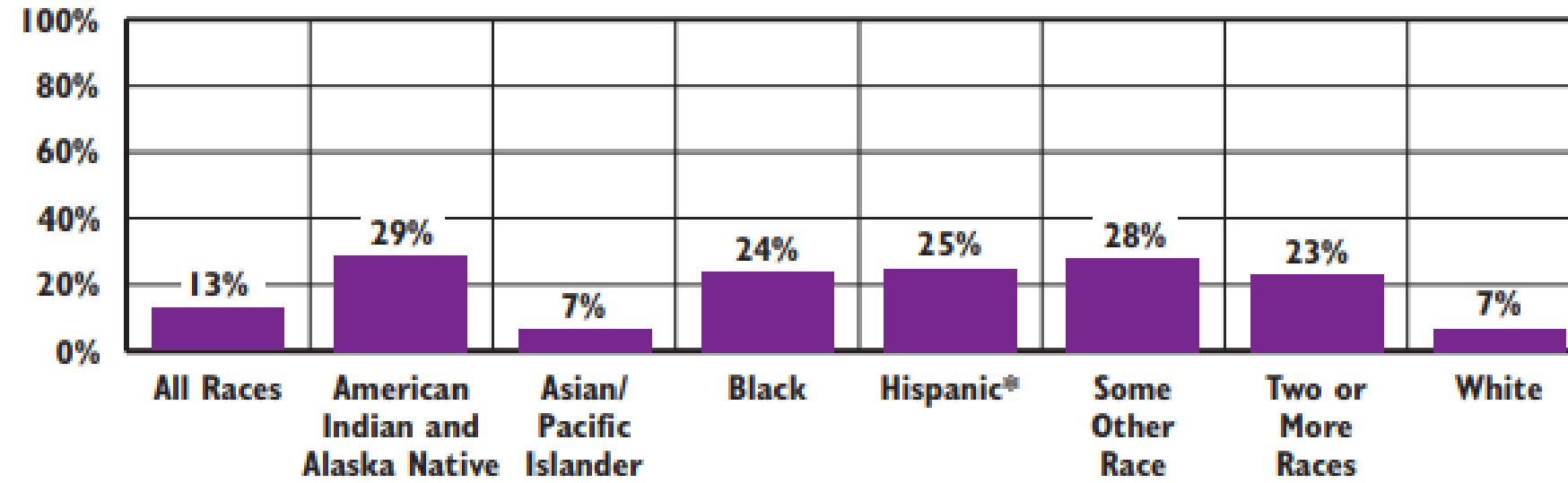
CITY/TOWN	NUMBER IN POVERTY	PERCENTAGE IN POVERTY	NUMBER IN EXTREME POVERTY	PERCENTAGE IN EXTREME POVERTY
Central Falls	1,535	26%	561	9%
Pawtucket	2,982	19%	1,600	10%
Providence	9,733	26%	5,444	15%
Woonsocket	3,211	33%	1,837	19%
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>27,224</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>14,397</i>	<i>7%</i>

- Between 2019 and 2023, almost two-thirds (64%) of Rhode Island's children living in poverty lived in the four core cities.

Large Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Child Poverty



Children in Poverty, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2019-2023

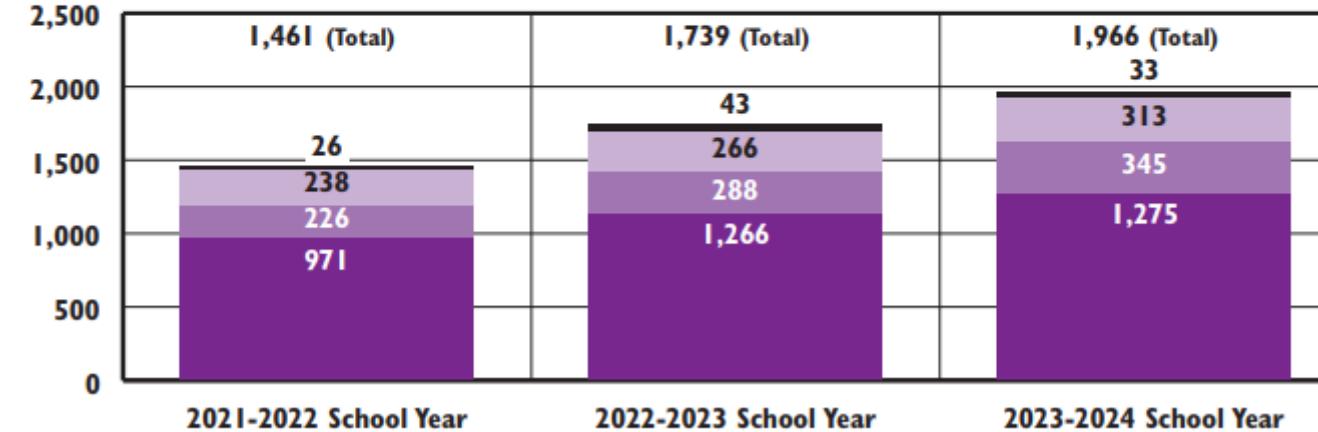


Homeless Children



Homeless Children Identified by Public Schools, Rhode Island, 2021-2022 through 2023-2024 School Years

■ Doubled Up ■ Hotels and Motels ■ Shelters ■ Unsheltered

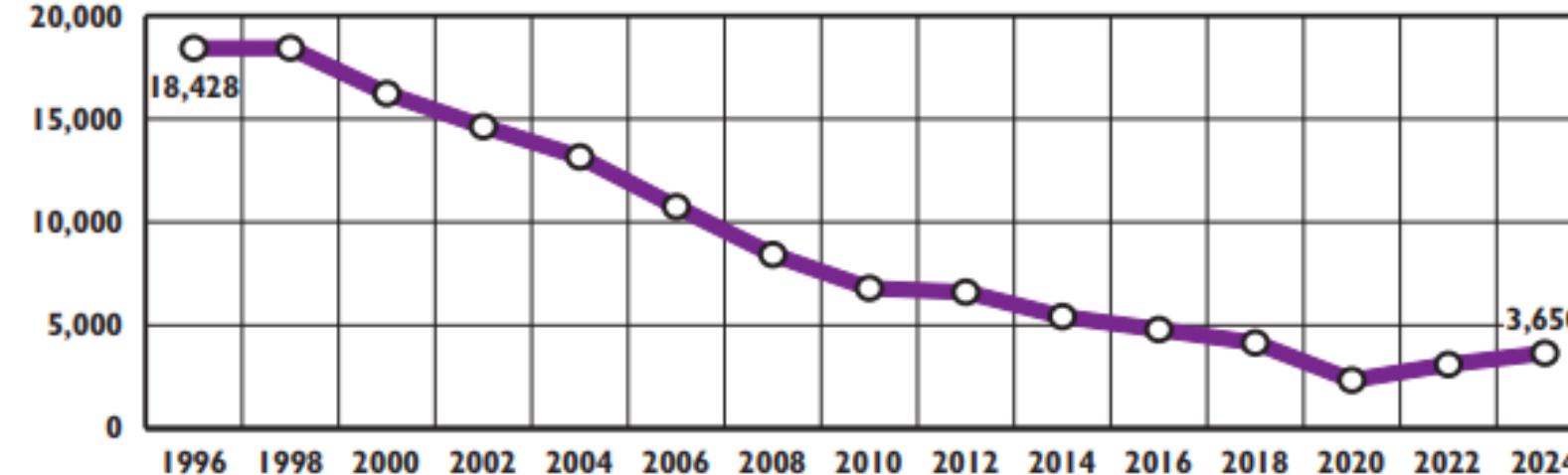


- During the 2023-2024 school year, **Providence** public school personnel identified 408 students as homeless.
 - 53% were doubled up
 - 28% were in shelters
 - 2% were unsheltered
 - 16% were in hotels or motels

Children in Families Receiving Cash Assistance



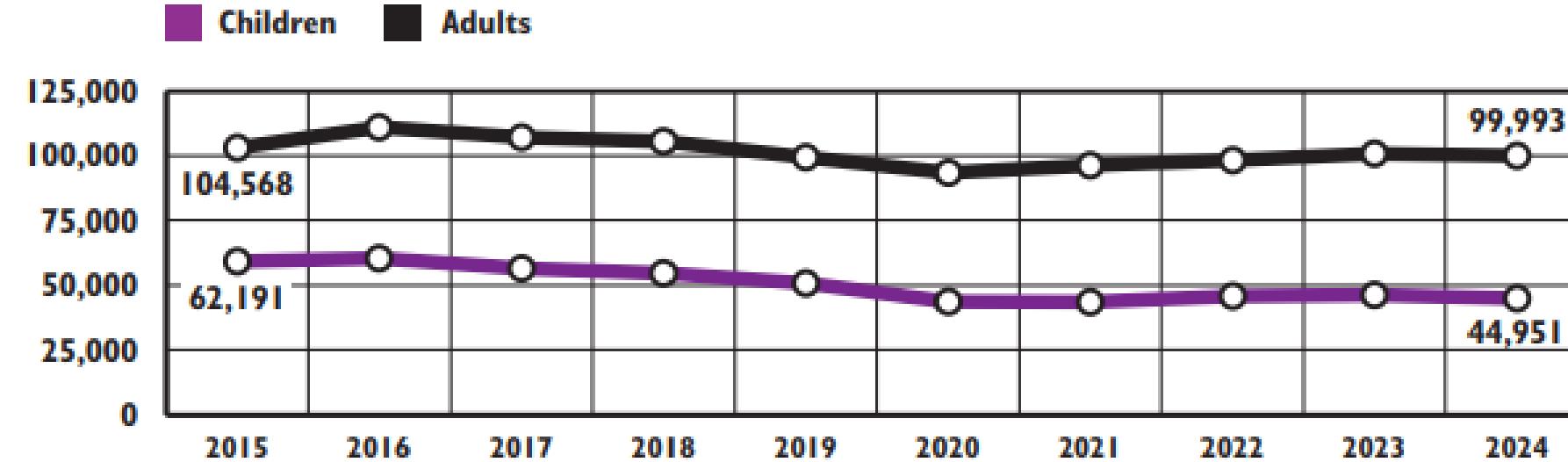
Cash Assistance Caseload, Rhode Island, 1996–2024*



- The Rhode Island cash assistance caseload has steadily declined since 1996, with an increase between 2020 and 2024, but still below 2019 pre-pandemic caseload.
- **6% (2,571) of children in Providence receive cash assistance.**
- 68% of RI Works beneficiaries are children under age 18.
- A family of 3 receives a maximum of \$865/month, well below the poverty level, and benefits have only been raised twice in the past 30 years.



Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Children and Adults, Rhode Island, 2015-2024

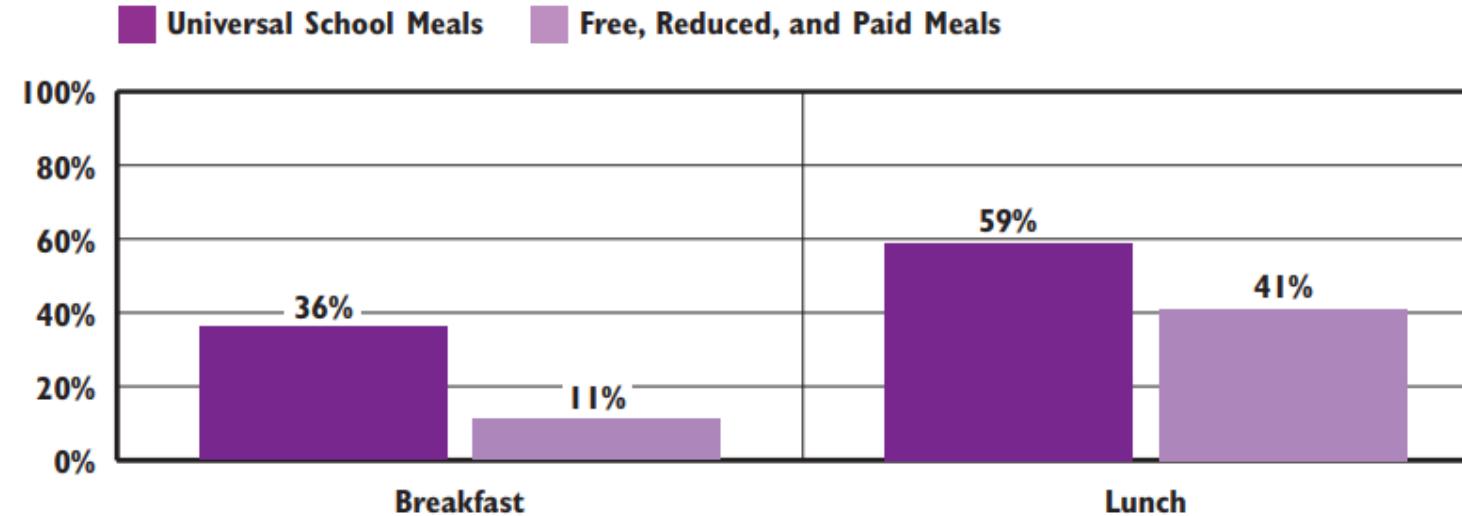


In October 2024, 16,173 Providence children were receiving SNAP benefits.

Children Participating in School Meals



Percentage of Children Participating in School Meal Programs, Rhode Island, October 2024



- Schools participating in CEP or other universal meals options have higher rates as do schools offering breakfast in the classroom, grab-and-go, and other flexible options.
 - Providence has 64% of students participating in lunch and 52% in breakfast.
 - Central Falls has 80% participating in lunch and 41% in breakfast.
 - Pawtucket has 71% participating in lunch and 35% in breakfast.
 - Woonsocket has 64% participating in lunch and 33% in breakfast

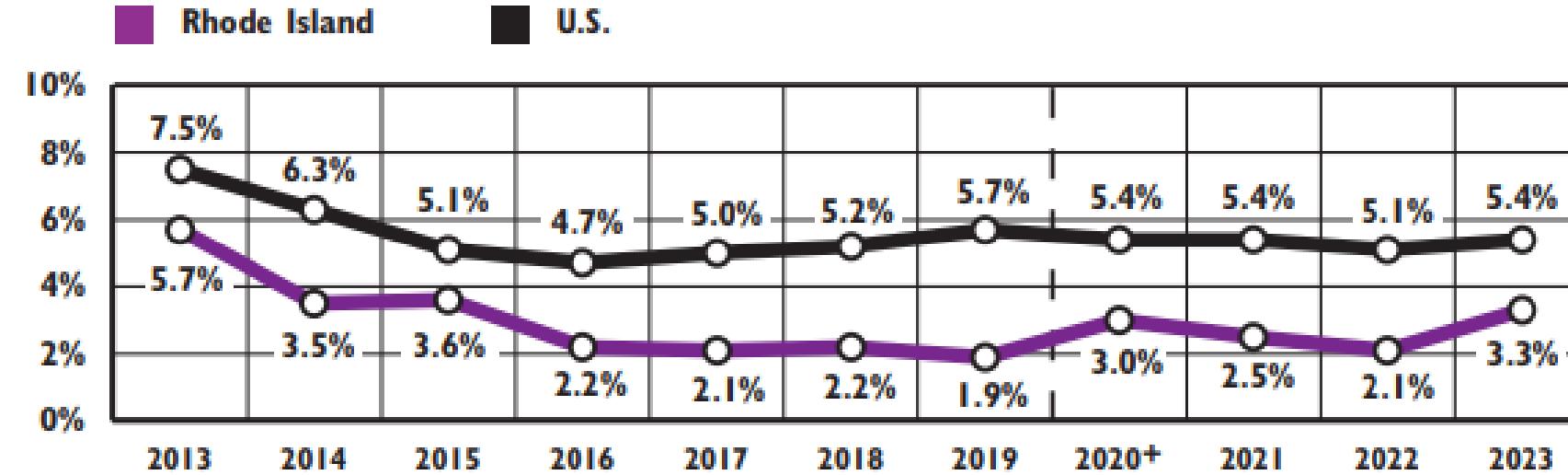


Health

Children's Health Insurance



Children Without Health Insurance, Rhode Island, 2013-2023

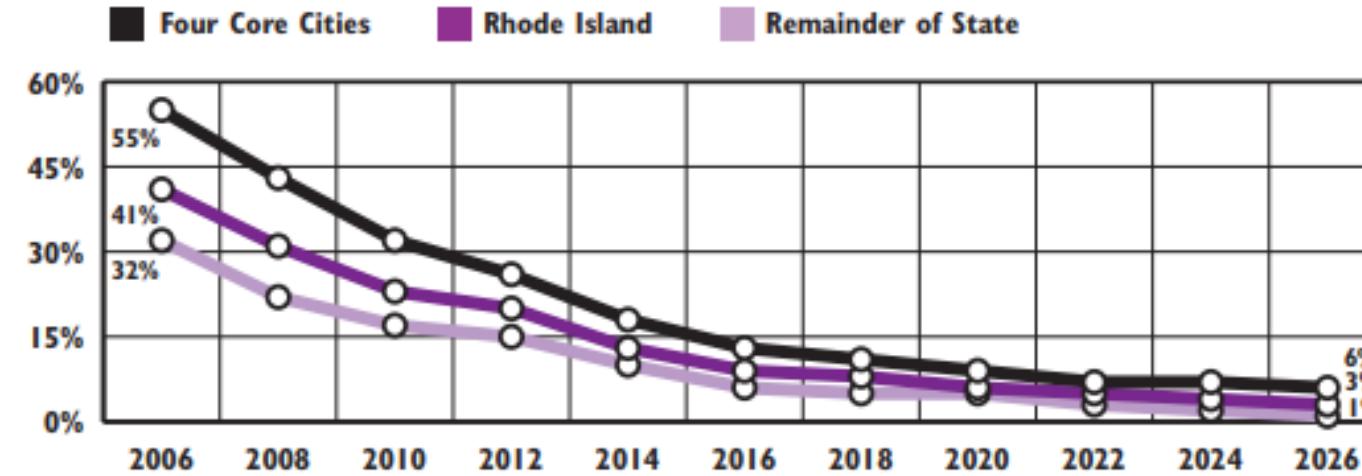


- In 2023, 3.3% of Rhode Island's children under age 19 were uninsured. Rhode Island ranks 10th best state in the U.S., with 96.7% of children covered.
- Approximately 54% (2,858) of the estimated 5,254 uninsured children under age 18 in Rhode Island between 2019 and 2023 were eligible for Rite Care coverage based on their family incomes but were not enrolled (some due to immigration status who may now be eligible).

Children Affected by Lead Exposure



Children Entering Kindergarten with History of Elevated* Blood Lead Level, Rhode Island, Four Core Cities, and Remainder of State, 2006-2026

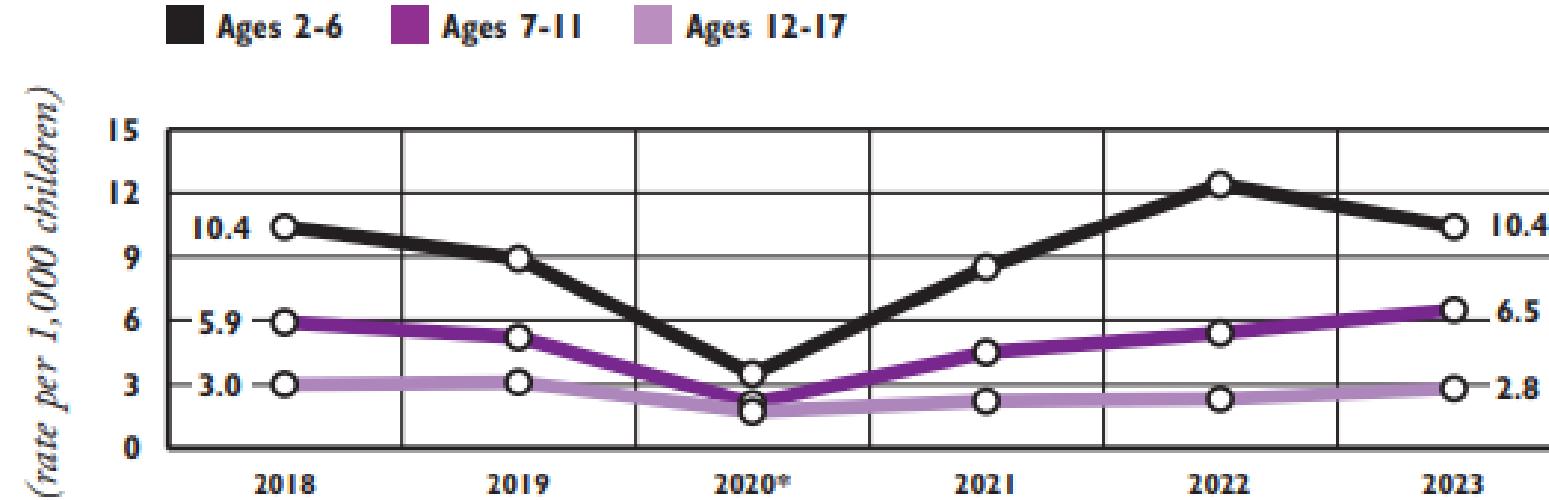


- 2,557 **Providence** children due to enter kindergarten in the fall of 2026
- 272 (10.6%) were confirmed positive for $\geq 3.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$, the highest rate in the state.

Children with Asthma



Asthma Emergency Department Visit Rates By Age, Rhode Island Children, 2018-2023*



*Asthma-related emergency department visits decreased substantially in 2020 and must be interpreted with caution due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **Providence** has the highest rate of asthma-related emergency department visits in the state at 9.2 per 1,000 children, compared to 5.1 for the state as a whole.
- Most common chronic condition among children.
- One of the leading causes of school absence.

Children's Mental Health Crisis Continues

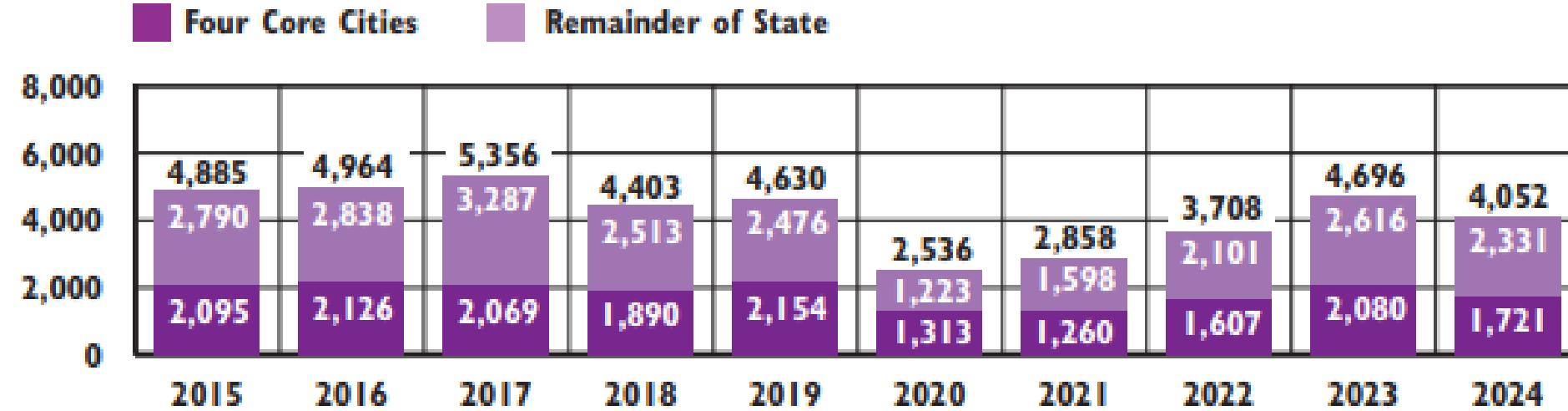
- **Concerns about increased mental health needs of children and youth.**
 - Nationally, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health issues and suicide among adolescents had increased.
 - In April 2022, a [Rhode Island State of Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health](#) was declared.
 - On the *2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*:
 - 36% of RI high school students reported feeling sad or hopeless for more than 2 weeks in the previous year.
 - 9% of RI high school students reported attempting suicide 1+ times during past year
 - Highest rates for Hispanic, LGB, and transgender students
 - In 2022, more than half (59%) of RI children ages 3-17 who needed mental health treatment or counseling had a problem getting needed care



Youth Referred to Family Court



Juvenile Wayward/Delinquent Offenses Referred to Rhode Island Family Court, 2015-2024

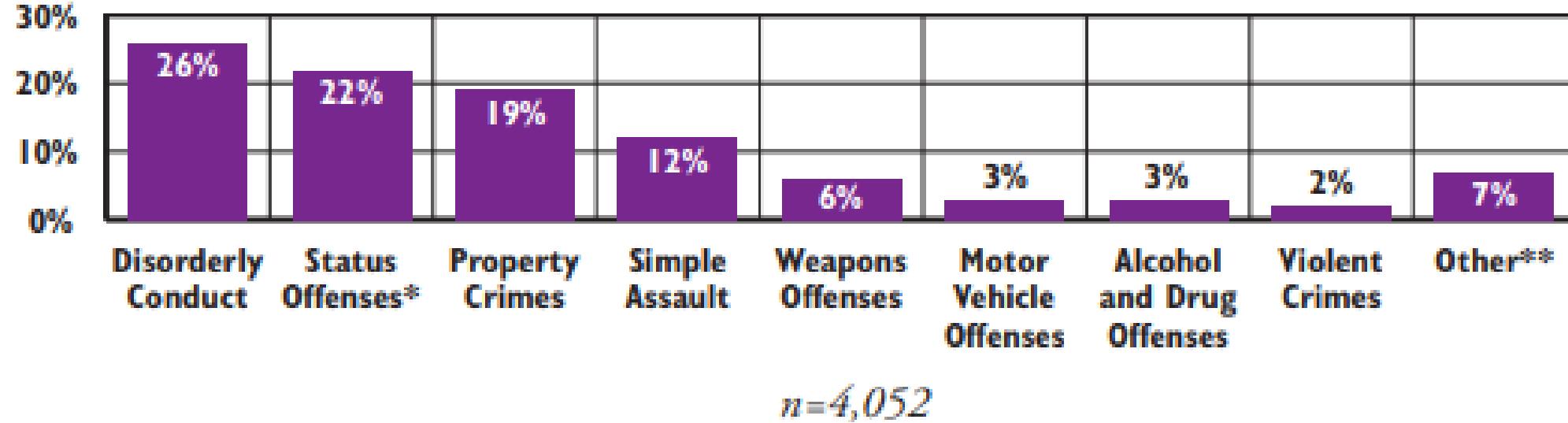


- During 2024 in Rhode Island, 2,254 children and youth were referred to Family Court for 4,052 offenses.
 - 23% of offenses referred to Family Court involved youth ages 13 or younger.
 - Juvenile Hearing Boards provide a community-based diversion option

Youth Referred to Family Court



Juvenile Offenses, By Type of Offense, 2024

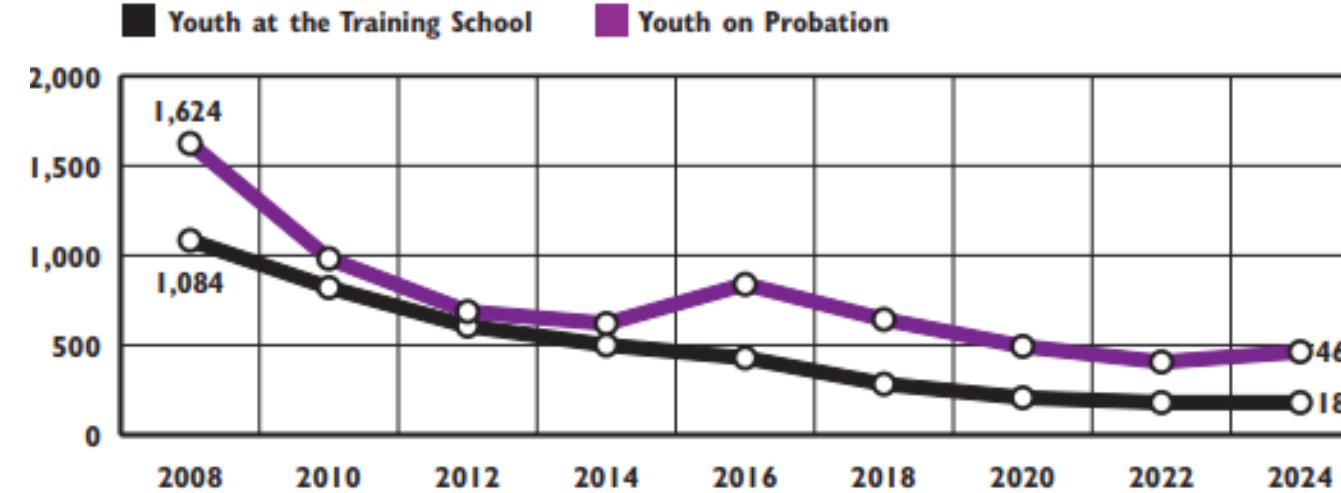


- Of the 4,052 offenses for which youth were referred to Family Court in 2024, 2% were for violent crimes.

Youth in the Justice System



Youth in the Justice System, Calendar Years 2008-2024



- From 2008 to 2024, the total number of youth at the Training School at any point during the year declined by 83%.
 - Central Falls – 9
 - Pawtucket – 25
 - Providence – 58
 - Woonsocket – 17
- On December 31, 2024, 41 youth were physically at the Training School.
- 61% of youth are at the RITS for less than 2 weeks.

Children of Incarcerated Parents



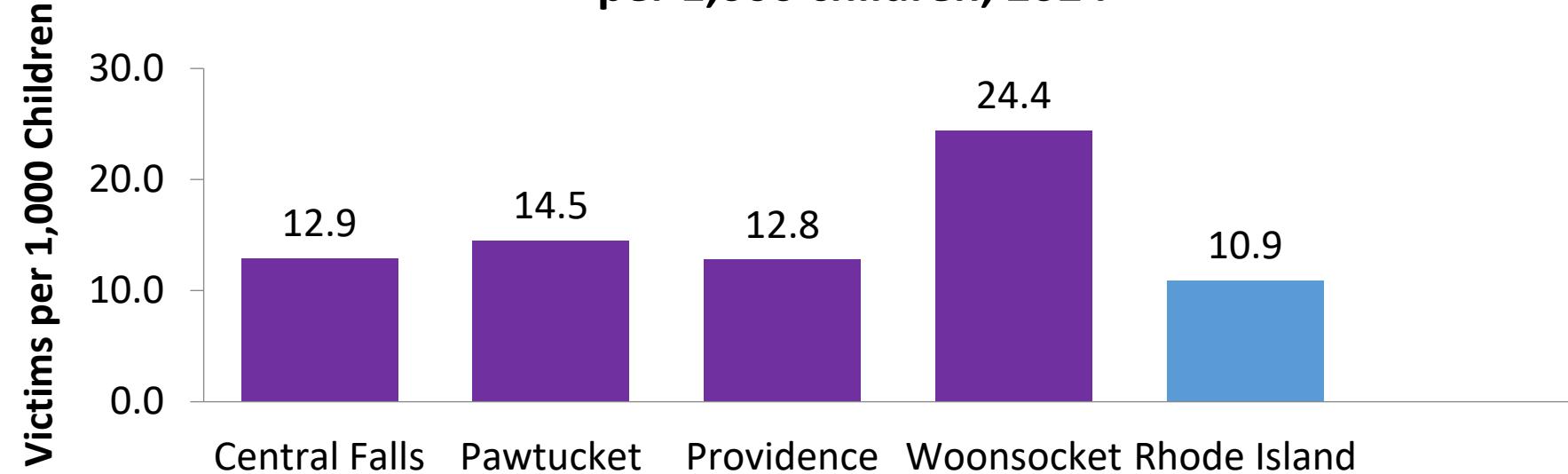
Parents at the Rhode Island Adult Correctional Institutions (ACI), September 30, 2024

	INMATES SURVEYED*	# REPORTING CHILDREN	% REPORTING CHILDREN	# OF CHILDREN REPORTED
Awaiting Trial	800	589	74%	1,531
Serving a Sentence	1,581	997	63%	2,463
TOTAL	2,381	1,586	67%	3,994

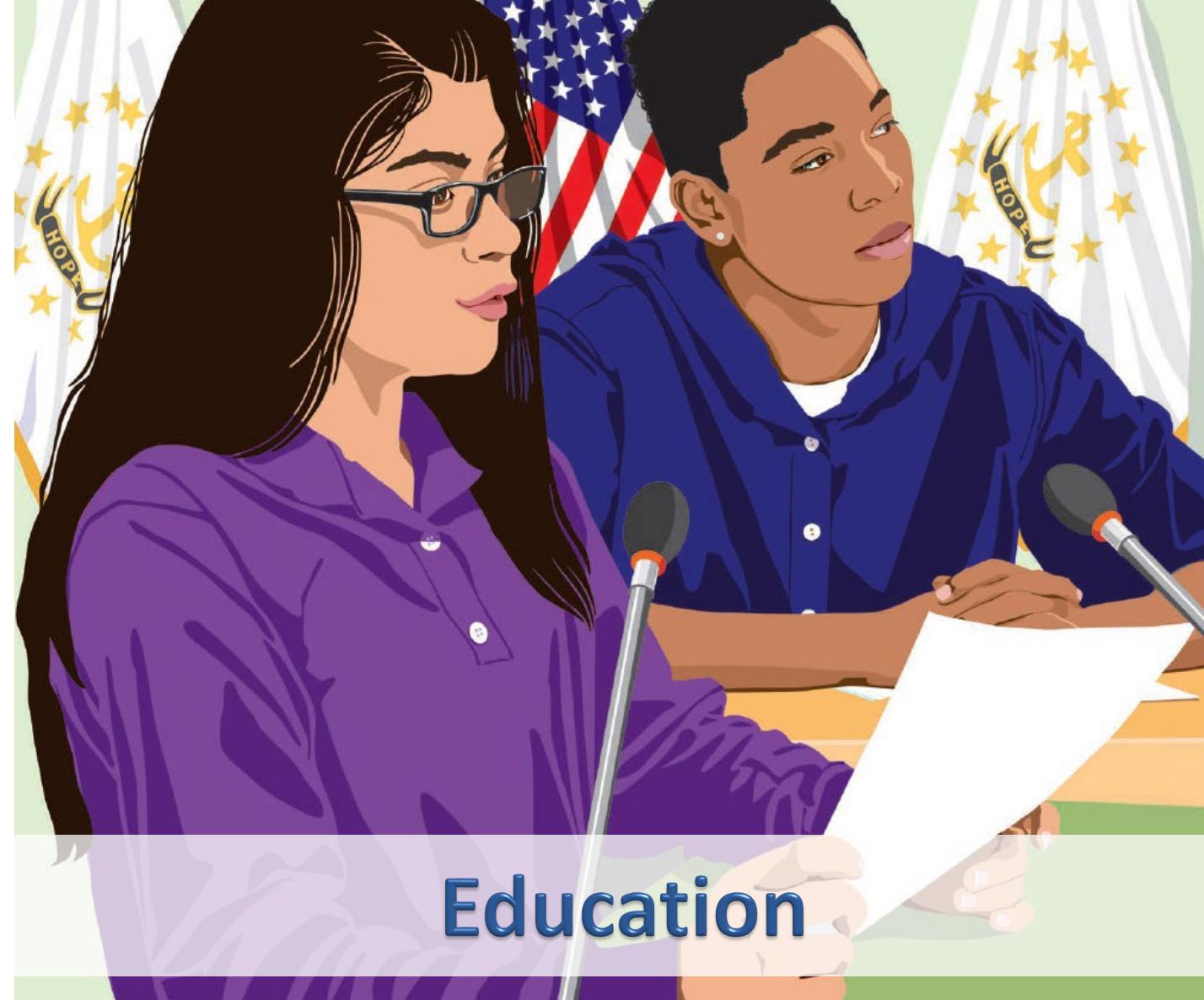
- On September 30, 2024:
 - 304 incarcerated parents with a known in-state residence identified **Providence** as their last place of residence.
 - These parents reported 751 children.
 - Providence has the 2nd highest rate of children with incarcerated parents in the state (18.3 per 1,000 children) with only Newport having a higher rate.

Child Neglect and Abuse

Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect per 1,000 children, 2024



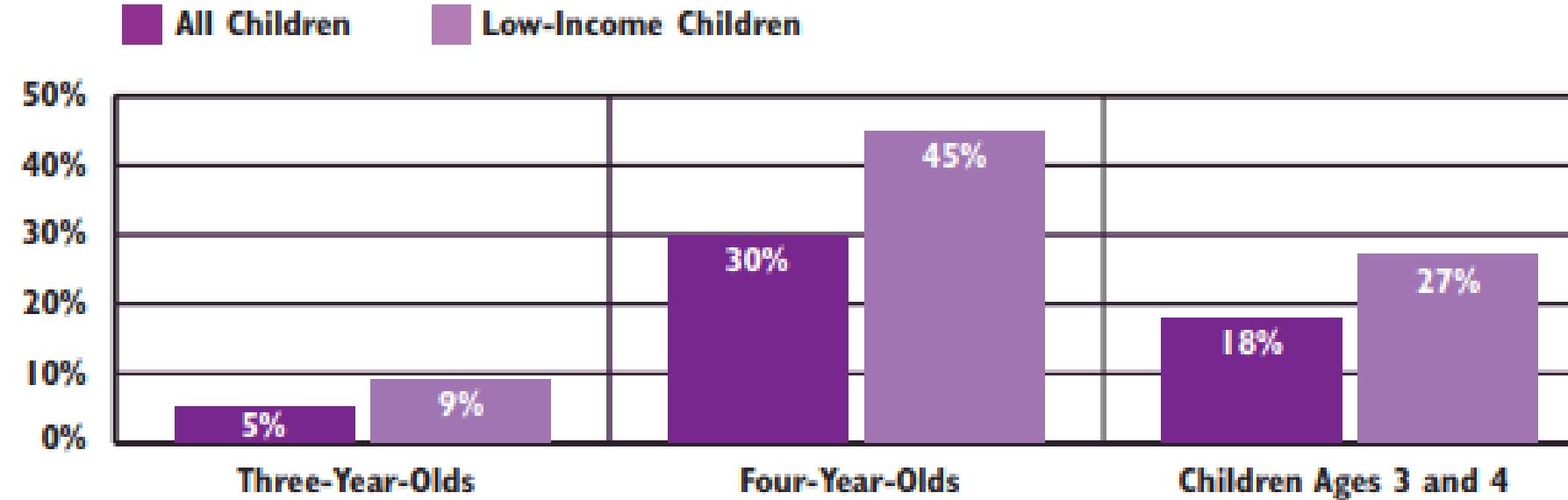
- Providence's child abuse and neglect victim rate is higher than the rate for the state, but the lowest among the four core cities.
- Vast majority of child abuse and neglect victims statewide experienced neglect (80%).



Children Enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K



Percentage of Children Ages 3 and 4 Enrolled in Head Start and/or RI Pre-K, Rhode Island, 2024-2025

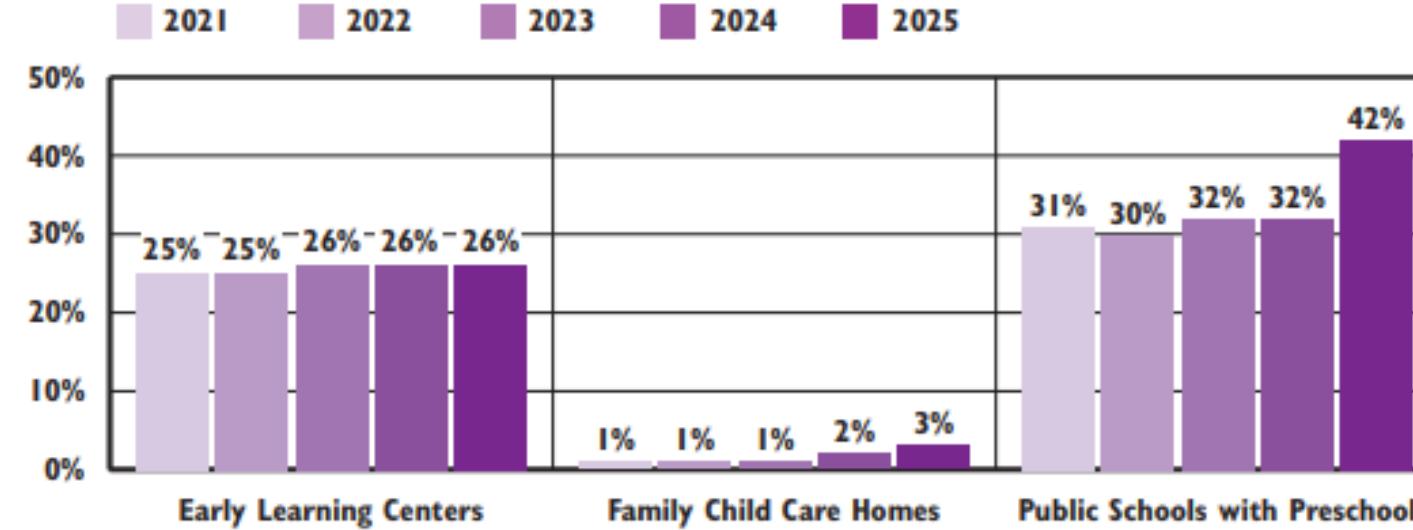


- 32% of low-income 3- and 4-year-olds in Providence were enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K
- 29% of all 3- and 4-year-olds in Providence were enrolled in Head Start or RI Pre-K.

High Quality Early Learning Programs



Percentage of Licensed Early Learning Centers,
Family Child Care Programs, and Public Schools with a
High-Quality BrightStars Rating (4 or 5 Stars), Rhode Island, 2021-2025



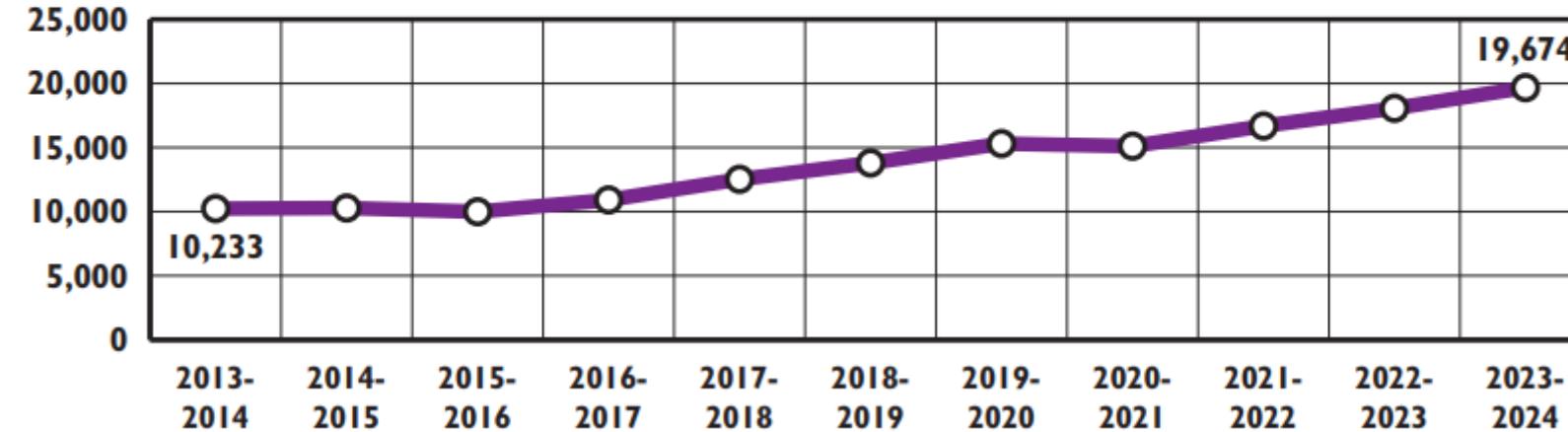
In Providence

- 87% of child care centers and preschools participate in BrightStars.
 - 40% have a high-quality rating of 4 or 5 stars
- 94% of family child care homes participate in BrightStars.
 - 2% have a high-quality rating of 4 or 5 stars
- 73% of public schools with preschool classrooms participate in BrightStars.
 - 18% have a high-quality rating of 4 or 5 stars

Multilingual Learners



Multilingual Learners, Rhode Island, 2013-2014 Through 2023–2024 School Years

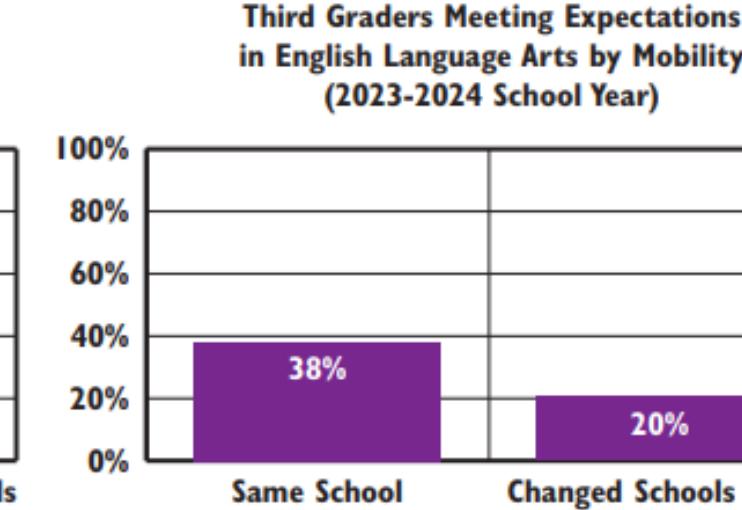
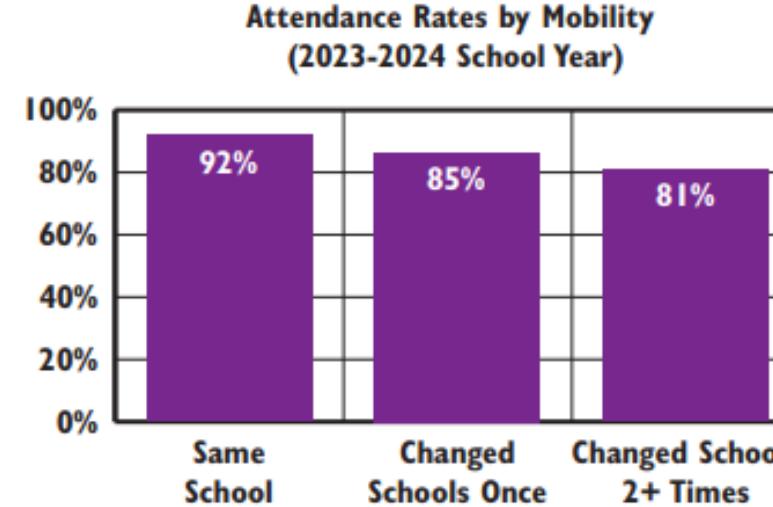


- During the 2023-2024 school year:
 - 52% of Central Falls students were MLLs (highest %)
 - 23% of Pawtucket students were MLLs
 - 40% of Providence students were MLLs (highest #)
 - 18% of Woonsocket students were MLLs
 - 14% of all Rhode Island students were MLLs

Student Mobility



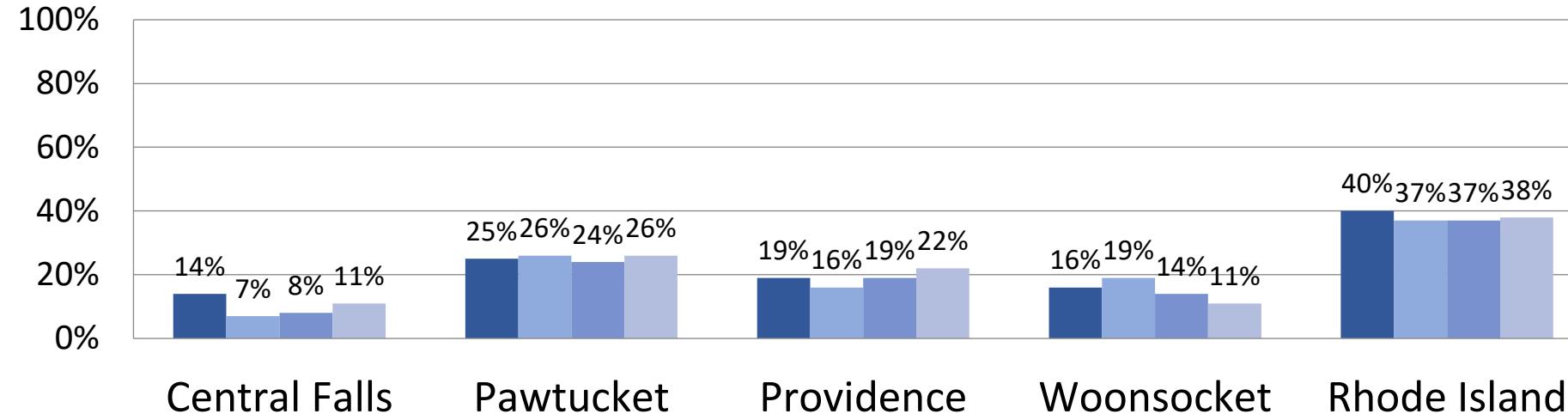
School Mobility and Education Outcomes in Rhode Island



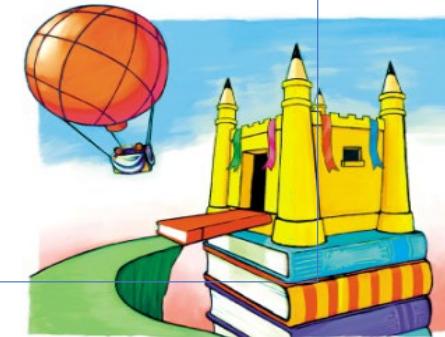
- During the 2023-2024 school year, more than 1 in 5 **Providence** students enrolled after September 30th or withdrew before June 1, representing a 23% student mobility rate.
- Providence has the 2nd highest student mobility rate in the state with Central Falls having the highest at 31%.

Third-Grade Reading Skills Down After Pandemic

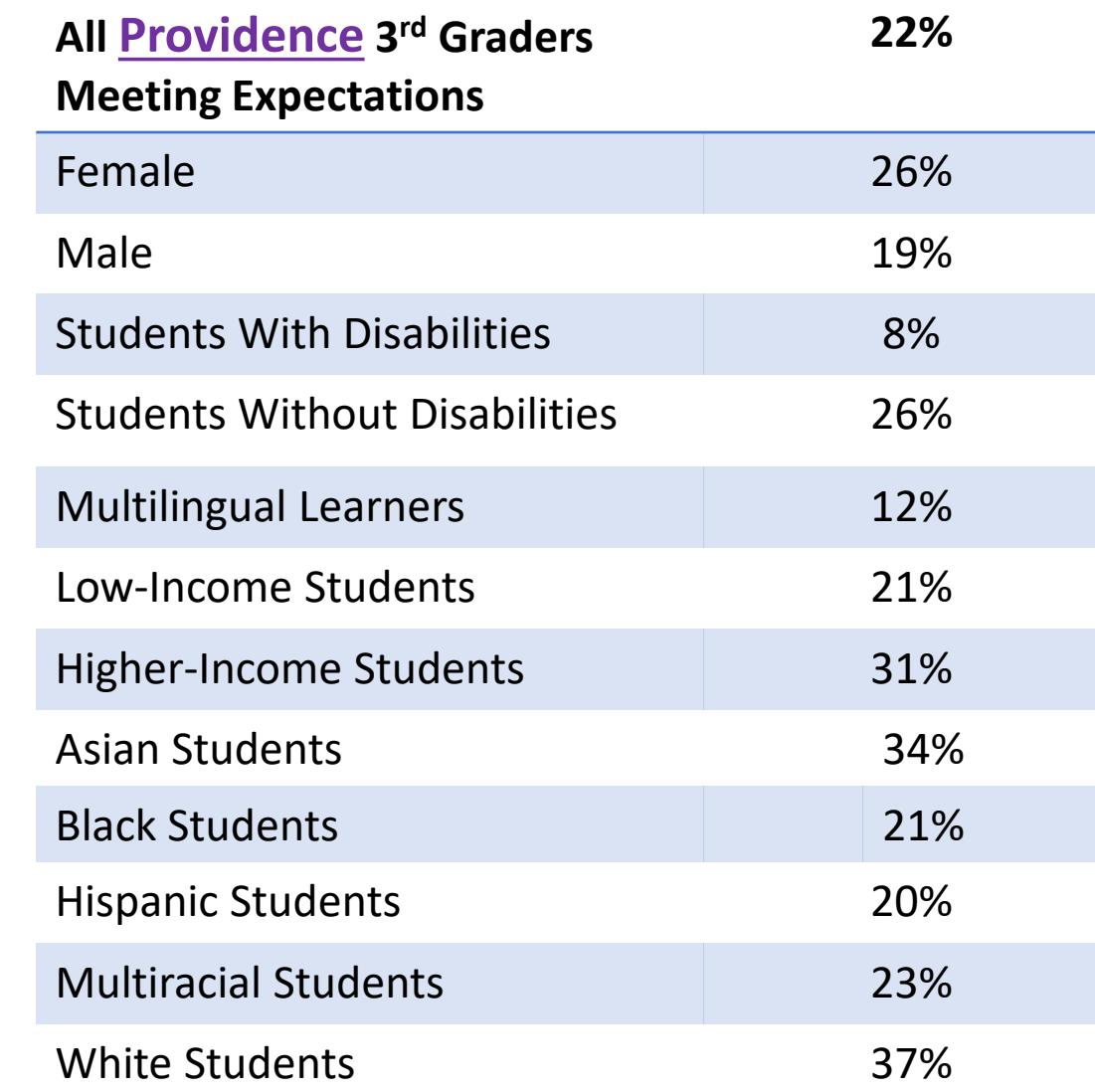
Third-Graders Meeting Expectations in Reading 2021-2024



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education,
Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS), 2021-2024.

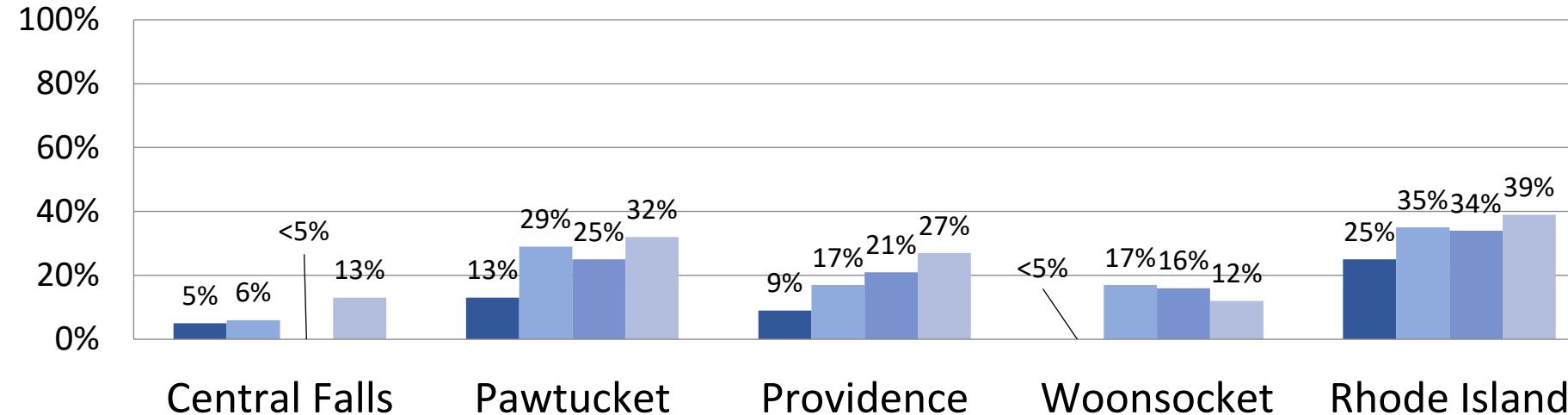


Disparities in 3rd Grade Reading and What We Can Do About It

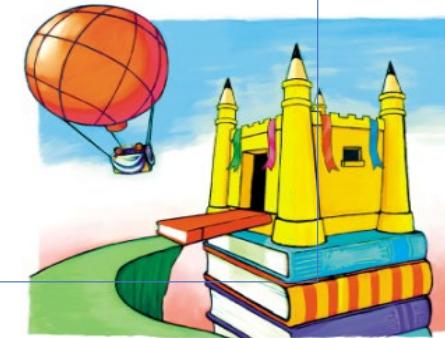


Third-Grade Math Skills Rebounding After Pandemic

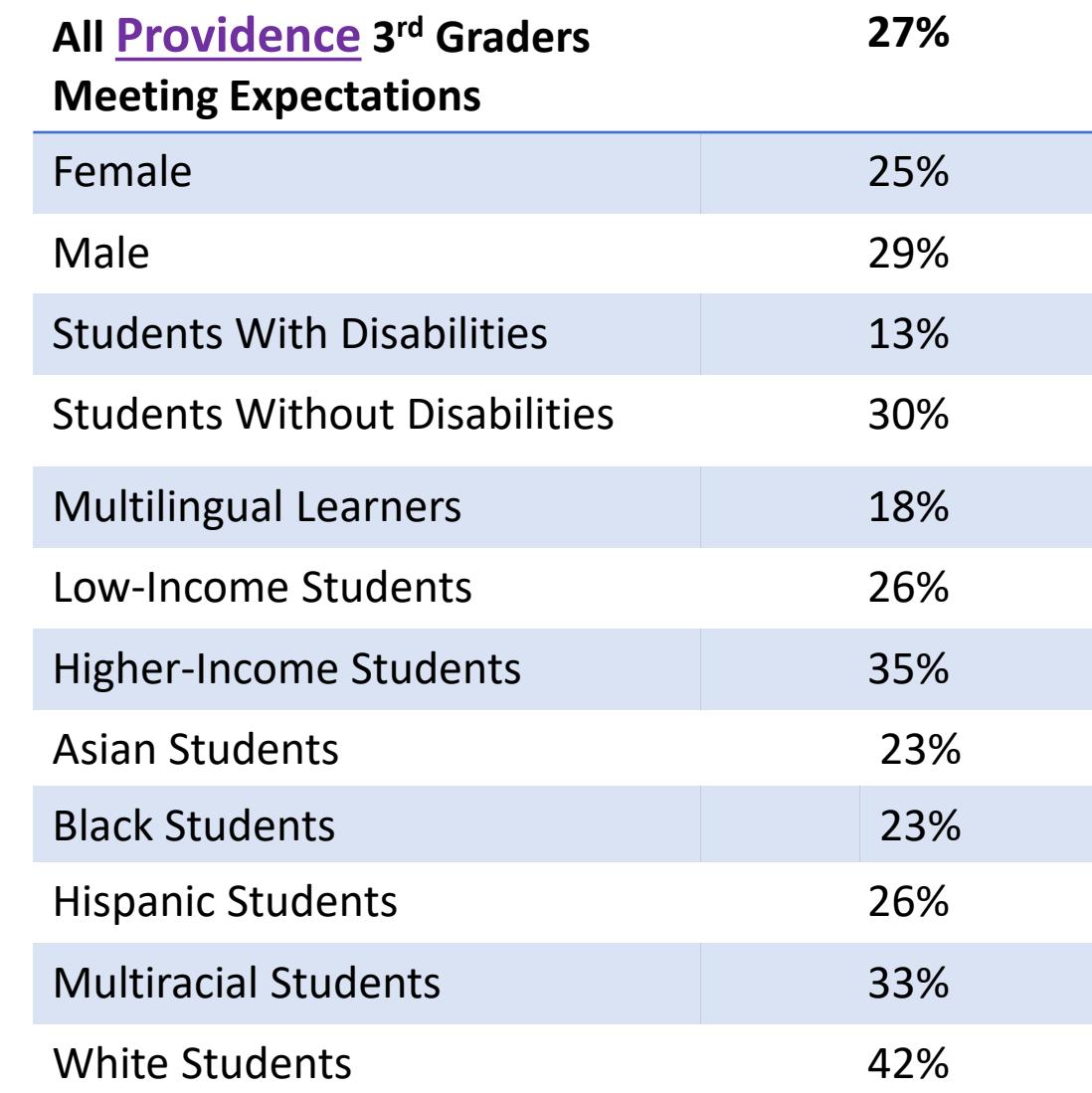
Third-Graders Meeting Expectations in Math 2021-2024



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education,
Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS), 2021-2024.



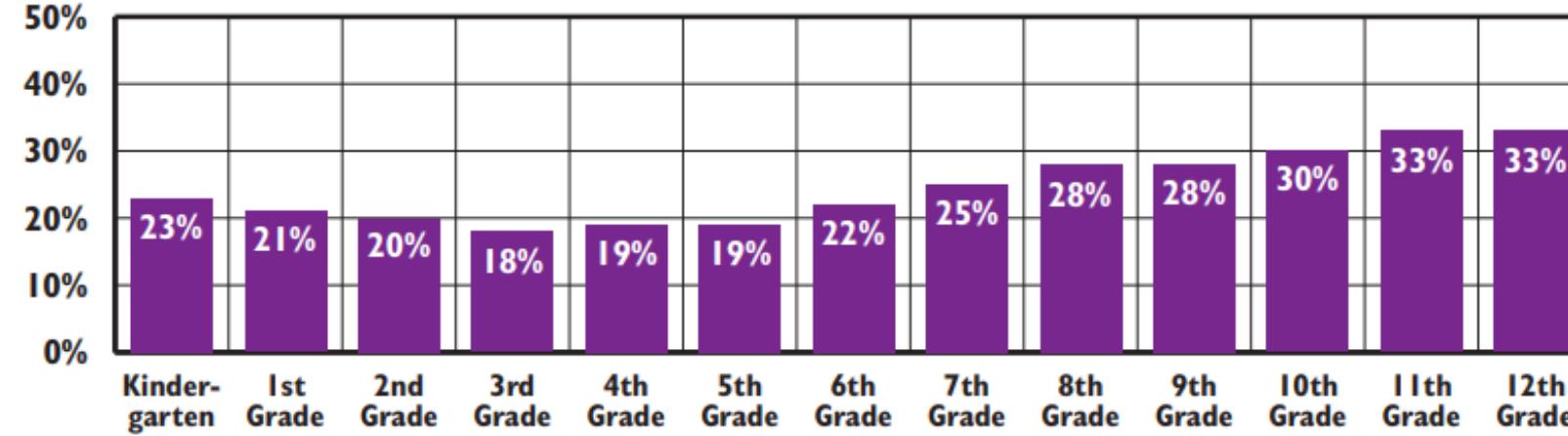
Disparities in 3rd Grade Math and What We Can Do About It



Chronic Absence Rates Declining



Chronic Absence Rates in Rhode Island by Grade, 2023-2024 School Year



- 30% of Providence K-3 students were chronically absent during the 2023-2024 school year, down from 52% three years ago.
- Providence's chronic absence rate in high school has also declined from 70% three years ago to 44% during the 2023-2024 school year.

School Suspensions

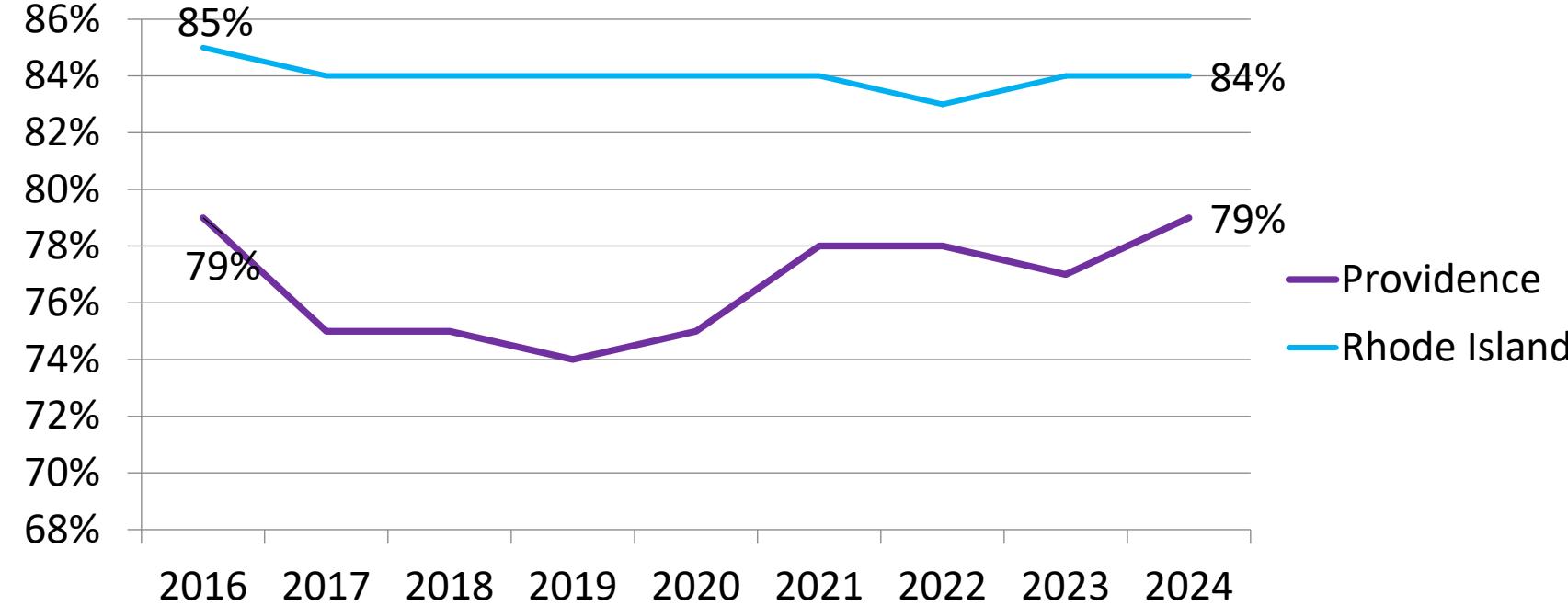


Out-of-School Suspensions by Infraction, Rhode Island, 2023-2024

TYPE OF INFRACTION*	#	%	TYPE OF INFRACTION	#	%
Fighting	2,204	24%	Obscene/Abusive Language	386	4%
Disorderly Conduct	1,580	17%	Weapon Possession	244	3%
Insubordination/Disrespect	1,337	15%	Arson/Larceny/Robbery/Vandalism	184	2%
Assault of Student or Teacher	1,274	14%	Electronic Devices/Technology	99	1%
Alcohol/Drug/Tobacco Offenses	1,117	12%	Other Offenses	55	1%
Harassment/Intimidation/Threat	728	8%	Attendance Offenses	0	0%

- During the 2023-2024 school year, Providence had 10 suspensions per 100 students, lower than the state rate of 14 per 100 students.
- Providence is still relying primarily on out-of-school suspensions with 98% of suspensions out-of-school vs. in-school suspensions.

High School Graduation Rate



Of the 1,819 Providence students who entered 9th grade in the 2020-2021 school year and were expected to graduate in 2024, **79% graduated in 4 years**, 11% dropped out, 1% obtained a GED, and 8% were still in school.

Who Is Graduating On Time and Why?

All Providence Students	79%
CTE Concentrators	92%
Non-CTE Concentrators	77%
Students With Disabilities	55%
Students Without Disabilities	84%
Multilingual Learners	75%
Low-Income Students	79%
Higher-Income Students	79%
Asian Students	83%
Black Students	83%
Hispanic Students	80%
Multiracial Students	69%
White Students	75%

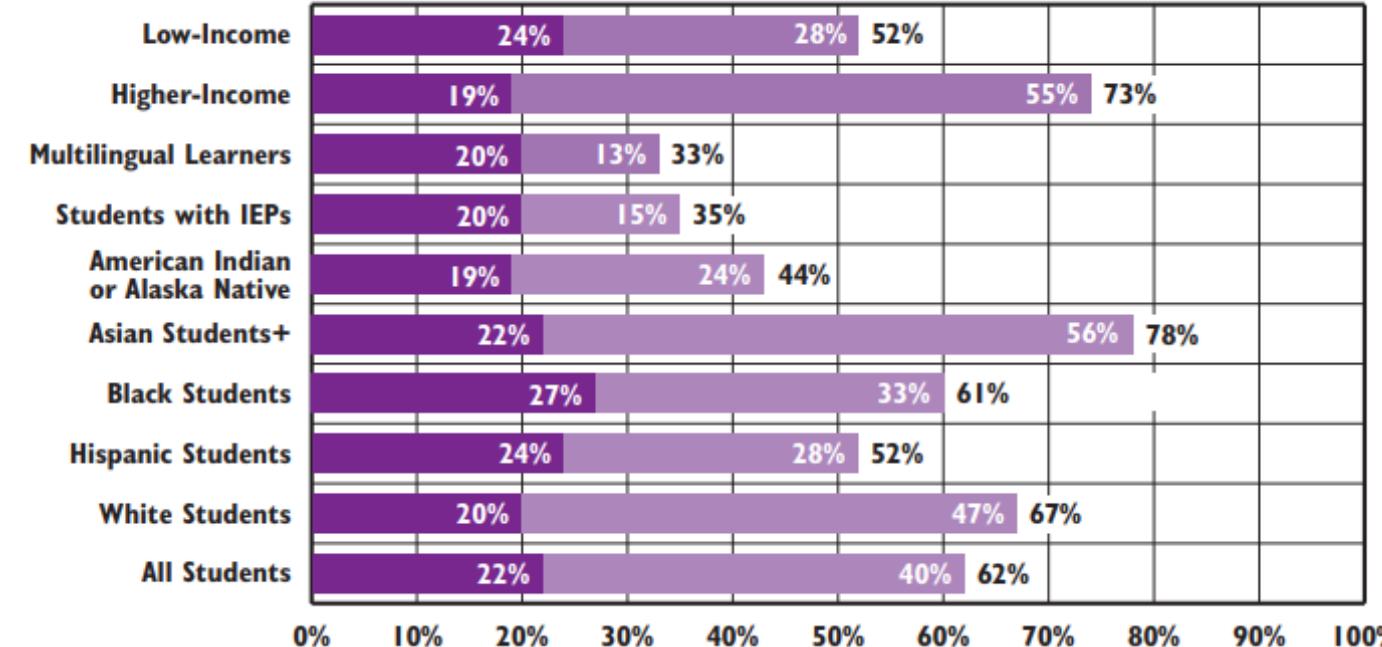


College Preparation and Access



Immediate College Enrollment by Family Income, Race, Ethnicity, and Type of College, Class of 2024, Rhode Island

■ Two-year College ■ Four-year College



- 63% of Providence students who graduated from high school in the Class of 2024 immediately enrolled in college, similar to the state rate of 62%.
- In Rhode Island and nationally, there are large gaps in college access, particularly four-year college enrollment, between low- and higher-income students as well as by race and ethnicity.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

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